REMARKS

These remarks are set forth in response to the Non-Final Office Action mailed May 31, 2006. As this amendment has been timely filed within the three-month statutory period, neither an extension of time nor a fee is required. Presently, claims 1 through 17 are pending in the Patent Application. Claims 1, 7, 10 and 15 are independent in nature. In the Non-Final Office Action, each of claims 1-17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,978,422 to Bushe et al. (Bushe) in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0098294 by Dean et al. (Dean.) In response, the Applicants have amended claims 1, 7, 10 and 15 to better define a resource as a resource for collaborative resources for consumption when completing a task in a collaborative application.

Prior to further addressing the rejections on the art, however, a brief review of the Applicants' invention is appropriate. The Applicants have invented a system, method and apparatus for metadata driven resource management. In accordance with the Applicants' invention, arbitrary and disparate manageable collaborative resources for consumption when completing a task in a collaborative application can be defined using metadata which describes, at the minimum, a resource name and one or more resource attributes including attribute type. Once defined, the metadata description can be used to create, locate and manage instances of manageable resources within a resource non-specific database. Moreover, the attributes of the resource definition can be used to render a UI through which the resource can be managed. Importantly, access control to the resource can be moderated in accordance with a containment hierarchy expressed within the metadata description.

As claimed, a metadata driven resource management method can include processing individual metadata documents to identify respective resource names and corresponding resource attributes for collaborative resources for consumption when completing a task in a collaborative application, which resource names and attributes are specified within the individual metadata documents. New resource instances can be created to be managed based upon the respective resource names and the corresponding resource attributes identified within the individual metadata documents. Moreover, the new resource instances can be persisted in a resource non-specific database. Finally, individual ones of the new resource instances can be located and managed based upon the individual metadata documents.

Advantageously, individual UI screens for managing selected resource instances can be generated based upon corresponding resource attributes specified within individual metadata documents used to create the selected resource instances. Significantly, it will be recognized by the Examiner that by driving the creation, location and management of resources in the collaborative computing environment through the specification of metadata, costly and ineffective direct modifications to the structure of the database will not be required. In this regard, unlike prior art resource management system configurations, in the present invention, the database can be a resource non-specific database and need not be tailored to accommodate the record format for any particular resource type. Rather, through the knowledge of the resource inferred from the metadata, the entirety of any resource instance can be located and managed within a generically structured, resource non-specific database.

Turning now to the rejections on the art, Bushe relates to a method for displaying managed object data associated with managed resources. In the Bushe method, a data dictionary can be retrieved that contains a master view definition, task definitions, view definitions and managed object data definitions. Thereafter, the master view definition can be displayed on a GUI through which a managed object selection and a task selection can be received to apply to the managed object selection. Importantly, as defined in the first paragraph of the Background Section of Bushe and unlike the "resources" defined in the Background Section of Applicants' patent application, *a resource as used and claimed in Bushe is "data storage system resources, host computer system resources, server computer system resources, network device resources or any other type of hardware or software resources".*

In paragraph [0003] of the Applicants' patent application, it is stated, "To facilitate the completion of a task or set of tasks, the typical collaborative application can schedule resources for consumption in the course of completing the task." Paragraph [0003] continues, "In this regard, a resource can include any tangible object prerequisite to the completion of a task or a portion of a task...resources can range from immutable, permanent and fixed resources such as computing resources, meeting rooms, audiovisual equipment and meeting participants, to consumable resources which require replenishment, such as pencils, paper, ink and toner, to name a few." Thus, clearly the term "resources" as used in the Applicants' patent application differs from the term "resources" as used in Bushe.

To better differentiate the usage of the term "resource" in the Applicants' claims from the use of the term "resource" in Bushe, the Applicants have amended claims 1, 7,

10 and 15 in a manner consistent with paragraph [0003] of the Applicants' specification. Specifically, the Applicants' amended claims now modify "resources" to include "collaborative resources for consumption when completing a task in a collaborative application." In consequence, it will be plainly clear that the combination of Bushe and Dean fail to provide a teaching directed to "processing individual metadata documents to identify respective resource names and corresponding resource attributes for collaborative resources for consumption when completing a task in a collaborative application specified within said individual metadata documents."

As such, the Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) owing to the foregoing remarks. The Applicants request that the Examiner call the undersigned if clarification is needed on any matter within this Amendment, or if the Examiner believes a telephone interview would expedite the prosecution of the subject application to completion.

Respectfully submitted,

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